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ABSTRACT

Rhetorical movement theory suggests two portrayals of social movements: the establishment conflict, or radical innovational portrayal, and the innovational, in which the movement is seen as upholding traditional values while suggesting institutional modifications or additions. A third portrayal, the competitive, lies on the midpoint on a continuum between the establishment conflict and innovational portrayals; in the competitive portrayal, a group is depicted as upholding old essential values while replacing old existing groups with new ones. This vision represents the group as denying conflict with basic existing values while declaring the obsolescence of old existing institutions. Thus, essential values are pictured as best served through the new group. In this portrayal, the drama lies in the agency-purpose ratio: the "devils" are those who oppose the realization of the ultimate group purpose, which in this vision can come only through the agency of the new group itself. (An extended analysis of the early Christian church movement as portrayed in the Bible's Book of Acts comprises a major part of the document.) (DF)

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Rhetorical Vision and Rhetorical Movement Theory:

A Reconceptualization and Extension

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In recent years numerous articles have appeared in the field of communication dealing with the rhetorical theory of movements [1] and with theory related to Ernest Bormann's rhetorical vision. [2] Presently the rhetorical vision has been incorporated into at least one formulation of movement theory and applied to at least one specific movement. [3] However, the theoretical implications of movement theory for rhetorical vision theory have not been explored. This paper undertakes one such exploration with the conviction that rhetorical movement theory can be profitably reconceptualized and extended within a rhetorical vision perspective, and that thereby rhetorical vision theory can be significantly enriched.

In this reconceptualization and extension of movement theory I am employing that subjective stance which is foundational to rhetorical vision theory. [4] That is, rather than viewing movements as objects to be theoretically characterized by rhetorical theorists, I wish to view movements from the subjects' stance and propose theoretical characterizations of their images of their own movements. As Bormann proposes, the task of the critic is to "look for patterns of characterization" among the dramatic incidents gathered from the rhetoric of the group being analyzed. [5] As an enrichment of Bormann's proposal, I wish not only to look for patterns of characterization within groups, but patterns of characterization across groups.

The relevant within-group characterizations here are those of the group itself vis a vis its other most significant group or groups. Within Bormann's fantasy theme analysis these within-group characterizations are group-specific patterns of dramatis personae, scenarios, and settings which dramatically interrelate to form the group's rhetorical vision. [6] While maintaining a subjective stance toward these within-group characterizations, the further question arises: How might rhetorical critics theoretically conceptualize these characterizations across groups?

I

In response to the above question rhetorical movement theory seems to suggest at least two starting points. A 1975 review of rhetorical movement literature by Ralph Smith and Russel Windes indicates that rhetorical theorists have predominantly characterized movements vis a vis other groups (usually the establishment with its representative groups) in terms of radical division and appropriate confrontational strategies--that is, the establishment-conflict movement. [7] Smith and Windes, on the other hand, contend that such a characterization is inadequate for all movements. Thus, they propose another type, the innovational movement, which they argue falls on the opposite end of a movement continuum from the establishment-conflict type. [8] They characterize the innovational movement as upholding existing values and only seeking modification of or supplementation to existing institutions. Its rhetorical strategies include denial of conflict between proposed innovations and existing values, emphasis upon "the weakness of traditional institutions and the strength of traditional values," and creation of a dialectic between the movement's scene and purpose. [9]

To the extent that these two movement characterizations by rhetorical critics reflect the subjects' characterizations of their own movements, they become helpful starting points for developing across-group theoretical conceptions of within-group characterizations vis a vis other significant groups. These two characterizations, recasted as two abstracted ways in which groups might portray themselves vis a vis other significant groups, are displayed in the following chart in terms of group goal and strategy portrayals.

[Accompanying chart is inserted here.]

Yet, as the above chart indicates, these two potential conceptions of group portrayals are not adequate for all characterizations found among groups or movements. To refine these portrayals further and to prepare for a discussion

of the potential yields of the approach proposed here. I wish to describe the competitive portrayal in the above chart and offer an extended illustration of it.

Group goals in a competitive type of portrayal lie mid-point between the poles of the continuum. The establishment-conflict type of portrayal advocates radical change in values and existing institutional groups. The innovational type upholds all existing values and only seeks to add a modified group to existing ones. However, the competitive type seeks to uphold only essential existing values and to replace the existing institutional group or groups gradually. These essential values would be pictured at a higher level of abstraction than at least some of those found in an innovational portrayal. In this way a competitive portrayal could still picture the group assaulting those more surface values which were viewed as necessarily bound to the existing institutional group. However, the essential values would always be pictured as upheld. An establishment-conflict portrayal might uphold some existing values, but only at the highest level of abstraction.

Group strategies in a competitive portrayal also lie mid-point on the continuum. Unlike an establishment-conflict portrayal, the competitive approach avoids picturing an open attack upon existing values (at least the more basic ones). It also avoids the total denial of conflict with existing values and institutional groups, unlike an innovational portrayal. The innovational type pictures a group as strengthening existing values and criticizing existing institutional groups only enough to bring some modification within them or to make room for an additional group supportive of the rest. Similarly, the competitive portrayal denies the group's conflict with essential existing values. However, it openly declares the ineffectiveness and obsolescence of existing institutional groups. In fact the competitive group picture seeks to establish new institutional groups which are portrayed as

apart from and in competition with the old existing ones. Unlike the establishment-conflict picture, the competitive one does not show the group as directly seeking to destroy old institutional groups. It pictures the group as criticizing old ones but does not picture direct attacks on them. However, it does represent the group as seeking followers from among their ranks. In essence the competitive group portrayal seeks to establish the new group on the same ground as the old one. It does this by representing the group as eating away at the old, yet without directly seeking its demise, so that the old group is seen as dying on its own accord.

Conflict or dialectic in these three group portrayals also varies. The establishment-conflict portrayal creates a vision in which the actors in the group or movement are engaged in deadly combat with the forces of evil who are especially the "devils" in the establishment groups found in the scene. These forces are personified in terms of actual people in the establishment groups who, as representatives of those groups, are resisting their own downfall. Thus the conflict is pictured as personal combat between representatives of the new movement and the establishment groups.

The innovational portrayal pictures the new movement or group as supportive of existing institutional groups and their representatives. Thus it must envision drama between the purpose of the movement, which is valued by both the new group and establishment ones, and impersonal forces in the scene. These impersonal "devil" forces are pictured as despised by both the new movement and the establishment groups so that no one in the establishment groups with arise to defend them. In this way open conflict with establishment groups is envisioned as unnecessary while drama, which makes the new movement dynamic, can be created.

Dialectic in the competitive group representation differs from either of the above. Since this portrayal represents the new group as founded upon

the same essential values as the established group, it envisions the drama revolving around the agency through which these values may be best achieved. The agency-purpose dramatic ratio tends to be central. However, the agency-actor ratio is also prevalent. The reason for the centrality of agency is the nature of the central question: How is the group's purpose (the ideals which are valued) going to be realized? The answer in a competitive portrayal is: Through the agency of our new group and not through the agency of the old obsolescent existing one. Unlike the innovational portrayal the "devils" may be envisioned as actual persons defending the old institutional group. Yet, unlike the establishment-conflict picture, the thrust of this portrayal is not against the old institutional group as much as it is for the building up of the new. Thus, in this group representation anyone or anything hindering the establishment of the group as the new institutional agency for realizing fundamental values is envisioned as a "devil" of sorts.

In summary, a competitive portrayal lies mid-point on a continuum between establishment-conflict and innovational ones. Such a portrayal enables a group to uphold old essential values while replacing old existing groups with new ones. This vision represents the group as denying conflict with basic existing values while declaring the obsolescence of old existing institutions. Thus, essential values are pictured as best served through the new group. The drama lies in the agency-purpose ratio. Anyone is portrayed as a "devil" who opposes the realization of the ultimate group purpose, which in this vision can only come through the agency of the new group itself.

To illustrate a competitive type of group portrayal I wish to examine in some detail the portrayal of the early church movement found in the book of Acts. The actual historical reliability, authorship, and date of composition of Acts has long been debated. [10] However, such questions are irrelevant when focusing upon Acts not as a historical document but as one portrayal of a group

vis a vis another significant group. As such a portrayal it falls under the rubric of one of Kenneth Boulding's manifest images of history which groups draw upon to give them dynamic, dramatic life. [11] I have chosen this example because it is a particularly clear illustration of a competitive type of group portrayal. So then, what kind of portrayal unfolds in the book of Acts?

> And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"
>
> He said to them, "It is not for you to know the times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."
>
> And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. [12]

Thus the portrayal of the early church movement begins. This brief exchange between Jesus and his most devoted followers establishes a number of basic relationships in the development of the group vision to follow. God the Father, envisioned as the ultimate agent, is portrayed as having been working through the personal agency of Jesus Christ. The past scene is represented as having been the nation of Israel and particularly its capital, Jerusalem. All of Jesus' actions, whether in speech or deed, are pictured as having been aimed at securing the belief in Israel that he was indeed the Messiah prophesied in Scripture who would usher Israel into the millennial kingdom. However, the religious institution of the nation, as well as virtually all its members, are portrayed as having rejected him--even to the point of crucifixion under the authority of the Roman government. Now, with Christ's resurrection in the background of the scene and his ascension in the foreground, his followers are pictured wondering about the kingdom. The envisioned ultimate aim is still the

kingdom and the ultimate agent still the Father. But the agency, scene and action are pictured as changing soon. Christ would no longer be the direct personal agency. The Holy Spirit now would be, only through these disciples. These followers, individually and corporately in the budding church, are represented as the new personal agency who will "witness" for Christ until the kingdom is ushered in. What about Israel? As a nation centered in its religious institution, it is pictured as being set aside as the agency through which the kingdom will be realized. As a result the vision of the scene now progressively shifts from Jerusalem, to Samaria, to "the remotest part of the earth." These elements of agent, agency, action, scene, and purpose interact through the portrayal so as to create the image that God is now witnessing through the church so that all the world might have the opportunity to be part of the kingdom.

> Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, . . . you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. And God raised Him up again, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power . . . . Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified . . . . Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [13]

So, according to the picture, God begins to witness through Peter and other church members on the Day of Pentecost. That day three thousand were added to the original one-hundred-and-twenty. Daily, believers are portrayed as being added to the church until soon there were five thousand men alone. "Signs and wonders" are pictured as done by the apostles throughout Jerusalem, and the church was "all with one accord" regularly meeting in the temple. [14]

However, the religious establishment of Israel is envisioned as "filled with jealousy" because of this threatening invasion of its territory. So they "laid hands on the apostles, and put them in public jail." But, according to the portrayal, threats could not silence them; "everyday, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ."[15] When even some of the priests began believing, the envisioned preaching of some like Stephen is represented as intolerable:

> You men who are stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did. Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murders you have now become. [16]

According to the vision, stones silenced the tongue of Stephen and a "great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem". Saul, too, began "ravaging the church" and thus all of the church except the apostles was scattered into Judea and Samaria. [17]

The envisioned change in scene for God's agency, the church, brought to it what is portrayed as a disconcerting shift in its image of both itself and the kingdom. According tc the account, Philip went into despised Samaria "preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ." Some of the Samaritans believed, were baptized, and through Peter and John are envisioned as even receiving the Holy Spirit. An angel is also pictured sending Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch who then believes. Christ himself is represented going to Saul who also believes. God through a vision brings Peter and the Gentile Cornelius together, and so a Gentile receives the Holy Spirit. Thus, the portrayal now seems implicitly to ask the questions: You mean the kingdom would not be restored to Israel alone? Could the church, and even the ultimate kingdom, be large enough for Samaritans and Sauls and even Gentiles?

Peter is pictured reporting to the church in Jerusalem:

> And he [the Gentile Cornelius] reported to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, "Send to Joppa, and have Simon, who is called Peter, brought here; and he shall speak words to you by which you will be saved . . . ." And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as He did upon us at the beginning . . . . If God therefore gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"
>
> And when they heard this, they quieted down, and glorified God, saying, "Well, then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life." [19]

According to the portrayal in Acts, while the church in Jerusalem was under direct persecution, Paul began to enact God's vision of the church as a witness to the remotest part of the earth.[20] At Paul's conversion God is pictured saying, "He is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." [21] On his first journey he witnessed of the gospel of the kingdom as far as Cyprus and Asia Minor. When a synagogue existed in a city he always is shown speaking there first. Yet, in this portrayal, Paul's popularity again and again is represented as having "filled" the Jews "with jealousy," who then begin to persecute him. But once the Jews had heard, he then is shown turning to Gentiles who respond to varying degrees.[22]

With the mixing of Jews and Gentiles in the image of the church, the vision in Acts focuses upon the relationship of the church to institutional Judaism. "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved" is the envisioned contention. [23] The portrayal seems to raise the implicit question: Was God still working through Israel's religious institution whose sine qua non was circumcision? Would the institutional religion of Israel walk hand-in-hand with the institution of the church? James

is pictured as proclaiming the answer of the Jerusalem council regarding circumcision and the Law of Moses:

> Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from the Gentiles, but that we write to them that they abstain from things contaminated by idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood. For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath. [24]

So as James, Paul, and the rest of the church are pictured, they leave circumcision and the observance of the Law of Moses to Judaism. Paul continues to proclaim Christ both to Jews and Gentiles on his second and third journeys. [25] His envisioned travels extend the church through Asia Minor, Macedonia, and as far as Corinth and Athens. Even though Paul was regularly persecuted and mocked, still "the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing." [26]

The final portion of the account is pictured as follows. Paul's concluding commission from God was "as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also." [27] When Paul arrived in Jerusalem after his third journey, persecution was so intense that Paul was saved only by the intervention of the Roman government. After appealing his case to Caesar, the Roman commander brought Paul before the Jewish religious leaders to examine their charges. Paul tossed them a bone of contention by shouting to the council, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead." [28] The chamber exploded. The Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, and the Pharisees, who did, began to fight over Paul and their favorite issue. Paul was spared dismemberment only by the Roman soldiers. After this incident the resurrection issue became the touchstone of Paul's defense before the Roman Governor Felix and King Agrippa. [29] Finally, after a treacherous journey to Rome, Paul is portrayed as waiting for his defense before Caesar while

"preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered." [30]

When this vision of the early church movement is placed on the continuum of group portrayals discussed earlier, it seems to lie closer to a competitive type of portrayal then to either of the others. The two criteria for placing a movement's vision on the continuum are the group's portrayals of its goals and rhetorical strategies.

The collective goals in this early church movement vision closely resemble competitive ones. The church is envisioned as built on the same essential values as the established Judaic religious institution. Yet, unlike an innovational portrayal, the church as pictured did not simply desire a modification of that existing institution. Rather it is characterized as its replacement. However, unlike an establishment-conflict portrayal, the envisioned church did not directly agitate for the dismantling or destruction of the Judaic system, either. Instead it sought to establish itself as the instrument through which God was now working in the world to bring in the ultimate kingdom. As pictured, the church certainly attacked disbelief among those in the old system and actively sought recruits among them. However, someone who persisted in disbelief and remained in the old institution was allowed to do so. The portrayal of the church does not include any agitation within it to dismantle or defile the temple, or in any other way physically force a change in the old system.

The portrayal of the languaging strategies used by the envisioned church illustrates and confirms the competitive nature of the characterization. The first major strategic portrayal is the denial of conflict with essential existing values. Peter, Stephen, and Paul, as pictured in virtually every one of their major addresses, appear emphasizing their respect for and continuity with the Jewish Old Testament Scriptures. [31] For example, in the picture of

Peter on the Day of Pentecost his common ground with his audience is their shared belief in the Scriptural writings of the Jewish prophet Joel and the Jewish King David. [32] In the picture of Stephen's speech he recites Israel's history, which he shares with his audience, and he turns his argument on a quotation from Isaiah. Paul, pictured in a pattern similar to Stephen's, speaks to Jews at Pisidian Antioch and tries to persuade Jews at Rome "concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets." [33] In the vision of Paul's defense before Governor Felix he declares that even though he is serving God "according to the Way," he still is "believing everything" that is " in accordance with the Law" and that is "written in the Prophets." [34] Thus, in this picture of the early church movement the church claims common ground with the history and Scriptures of institutional Judaism.

The second major strategic portrayal in this vision is an emphasis upon both the obsolescence of the old existing religious institution of Judaism and the vitality of the new church movement--one pictured as the best expression of basic traditional values. Initially the church movement is represented remaining under the umbrella of institutional Judaism. The Christians were "day by day continuing with one mind in the temple." [35] At this point the portrayal looks much like an innovational type of characterization. However, the leaders of the church are pictured as never intending to stay necessarily within the confines of institutional Judaism. By implication the portrayal seems to include a hope for the complete turning of all Jews to belief in Christ and thereby transforming Judaism into the new movement. However, as the vision of the movement progresses both institutional Judaism and the church are pictured as realizing that as institutions they are irreconcilably different.

According to the emerging portrayal these irreconcilable differences between the two are pressed upon the church as it is spread by persecution. First, Samaritans are envisioned as included in the church. However, they were

still circumcised and so partially related to Judaism. Second, Cornelius, a Gentile, is envisioned as receiving the Holy Spirit. Eventually numerous other Gentiles join the portrayal of the church through the travels of Paul. The vision of the church in relation to Judaism is finally settled at the Jerusalem council. Those wanting to define the church as only an innovation of Judaism are pictured saying of new Gentile converts, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses." [36] But the apostles and elders of the church are characterized as defining the new movement differently. For them neither circumcision nor the observance of the Law of Moses was necessary to be a Christian. So the church was different. The pictured sine qua non of Judiasm was not that pictured for the church movement, though they both are portrayed as based on the same history and Scriptural values.

However, this picture of the Christian movement does not define the group vis a vis Judaism in terms of an establishment-conflict relationship, either. Throughout the book of Acts the pictured movement treats institutional Judaism with respect. Strong words are included in the record, but never disrespect. Peter and John do not obey the Jewish council; however, this disobedience is not pictured as an act of disrespect to Judaism but of obedience to God. [37] The one time Paul is pictured overstepping the boundaries of respect he quickly retreats and pleads ignorance. [38] Even late in the progression of the vision Paul fully participates in some Jewish religious ceremonies. [39]

In this latter incident the Jews of Jerusalem are characterized as accusing Paul by saying, "This is the man who preaches to all men every where against our people, and the Law, and this place; and besides he has even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place." [40] Such a strategic portrayal would be consistent with an establishment-conflict approach. However, the account clearly pictures the accusation as incorrect and based only on circumstantial evidence. [41] Similarly, some Jews are pictured putting

putting forth "false witnesses" against Stephen. They say, "This man incessantly speaks against this holy place and the Law; for we have heard him say that this Nazarene, Jesus, will destroy this place and alter the customs which Moses handed down to us." Stephen as portrayed replies by first reciting a history of Israel and then implying the obsolescence of the temple in saying, "However, the Most High does not dwell in houses made by human hands." Yet in the account he never directly attacks the existing institution per se. He attacks only the unbelief of those within it. [42]

Hence, unlike establishment-conflict or innovational strategic portrayals, the picture of the early church movement emphasizes common values but competitive institutions. Yet this vision of the competition of the church does not include direct attempts to dismantle or attack the religious institution of Judaism physically. The envisioned response of the Jewish leaders is also consistent with this competitive picture. The "multitudes of men and women," "the crowd," and "the great multitude" move the Jewish leaders to jealousy in Jerusalem, Pisidian Antioch, and Thessalonica. [43] Such attribution of motive corroborates this competitive conceptualization of the church.

The third major strategic portrayal is the placement of the dialectic in the dramatic vision. This placement is most clearly seen through several of the portrayed speeches in the account. According to the picture, when Peter and the apostles were commanded by the Jewish religious council to cease preaching Christ, they answered:

> We must obey God rather than men. The God of our Fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him. [44]

In response to the above, Gamaliel, a prominent and respected council

member, is pictured advising his peers:

> Men of Israel, take care what you propose to do with these men. For sometime ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody; . . . And he was slain; and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing. After this man Judas of Galilee rose up . . . ; he too perished, and all those who followed him were scattered. And so in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action should be of men, it will be overthrown; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God. [45]

In the vision of Paul's defense before King Agrippa, he retells his conversion experience and concludes:

> Consequently, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance. For this reason some Jews siezed me in the temple and tried to put me to death. And so, having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating nothing but what the Prophets and Moses said was going to take place; that the Christ was to suffer, and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead He should be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles. [46]

These excerpts are representative of the agent-agency and agency-purpose emphasis of the vision of Acts. The portrayed drama turns on the question of who God is using to realize the purposes leading to His kingdom. Is it institutional Judaism? Or is it the church? The vision created in Acts says God is now using the church and, thus, by default is no longer using institutional Judaism. The account repeatedly refers to "signs and wonders" which the apostles perform through God's power. The repeated testimony of the account

as indicated above is that God is now working through the church. Even Gamaliel is shown understanding the conflict is centered in the agent-agency and agency-purpose realm.

Such an agency emphasis is consistent with a competitive group portrayal. In an establishment-conflict type the "devils" would be the Jews and the forces of institutional Judaism. In an innovational type the "devils" would be totally divorced from the establishment. However, this representation of the early church movement places a premium on instrumentality. Neither the Jews nor institutional Judaism are pictured as evil per se. The portrayal is that Judaism has had its day in God's sunlight, but now it is the church's turn. The only "devil" is characterized as disbelief which is the only thing the Christian movement attacks in the account. Since disbelief cannot be disembodied, the "devils" in Acts are pictured as disbelieving persons. However, neither the persons themselves nor the institution of which they were a part seem to be represented as evil in and of themselves. Thus the portrayal of the emerging offensive of the church movement is not so much an attack on Judaism as a proclamation that God is now realizing his purposes through the church and those who join it through belief in Christ.

This examination of portrayed goals and rhetorical strategies should demonstrate that this account of the early church movement best fits a competitive group portrayal. To place this vision into establishment-conflict or innovational purposes and strategies would either distort the vision in Acts or simply not account for it.

II

In light of the above reconceptualization and elaboration of rhetorical movement theory, what are some of the conceptual yields which might accrue both to rhetorical movement theory and to the theory of rhetorical visions?

For movement theory, the above approach would allow a shift of focus from developing a movement typology per se to theoretically elaborating movement process from the participants' viewpoint. However, this reconceptualization does not ignore the theoretical potential of the characterizations developed in the discussion of movement typology. To clarify this shift of focus I wish more fully to articulate the stance taken in this reconceptualization as illustrated by the church movement portrayal in Acts.

Four basic points need to be discussed. The first two can be quickly drawn from a helpful recent synthesis of constructivism by Jesse Delia.[47] First, the epistemological foundation of the stance asserts that "while events exist independent of any constructs or concepts concerning their meaning, persons come to know or understand events only through the application of constructs."[48] Second, through perceptual processes these constructs or symbolic interpretive frameworks are applied to those environmental elements which have been selectively attended to in order to give meaning to these elements. Thus, Delia writes, "Perception . . . reveals itself as an interpretive cognitive process in which the distinction between sensation and conception is blurred."[49]

Yet, third, humans seem to experience the "blur" of this interpretive cognitive process to varying degrees. The experience of here-and-now, face-to-face interaction contains the potential for the least amount of blur between sensation and conception because, as Berger and Luckmann argue, "the other's subjectivity is available . . . through a maximum of symptoms."[50] Yet the potential for "blur" increases the more remote the conception becomes from the sensation of here-and-now, face-to-face experience. The end of this potential for ambiguity or "blur" are "highly anonymous abstractions, which by their very nature can never be available in face-to-face interaction."[51] The transcending, integrating, and constructive quality of language enables human beings to move beyond the experience of here-and-now, face-to-face reality into more remote,

abstracted realms and in turn to "make present" aspects of these realms as real elements in the experience of the here-and-now. As Berger and Luckmann state, "Language now constructs immense edifices of symbolic representations that appear to tower over the reality of everyday life like gigantic presences from another world. Religion, philosophy, art, and science are the historically most important symbol systems of this kind." [52]

Fourth, a person's experiences of here-and-now everyday reality inform him or her in the calling forth of appropriate symbolic constructs, or adaptations of those constructs, with which to make sense of that reality. For a group or movement, according to Bormann, here-and-now reality, which is the stage for the catching on or chaining out of these constructs or fantasy themes, might include a "common psychodynamic chord or a hidden agenda item or their common difficulties vis-a-vis the natural environment, the socio-political systems, or the economic structures." [53] Thus, the current rhetorical situation of the group or movement becomes the immediate stage for drawing upon appropriate or appropriately adapted constructs from the group's repertoire. [54]

I now wish to apply this stance to the group portrayal in Acts and to contemporary groups or movements which might still include the Acts portrayal in their repertoire of constructs. The subject matter of the Acts portrayal is presumably the people, events, actions, and so forth, of the first generation of the church movement. At the time the original participants experienced these events and undertook these actions they construed themselves, others, actions, events, and the like, by drawing upon constructs found in the worldview within which they dwelt. Yet, within the perspective articulated here such people and events are necessarily construed not only at the time of occurrence but also subsequently. These constructs are rearticulated, and thereby reconstrued, over and over again depending upon new and current rhetorical situations. Some constructs in the emerging portrayals of the people and events of the early

church are so agreed upon that they form the boundaries within which any given portrayal of the church is counted believable. However, because of the complexity of human events and human perspectives, someone constructing any given portrayal has considerable leeway in selecting constructs and building a potentially believable picture.

One such construction at some subsequent point is the portrayal in Acts. At that time the author(s) dwelt within a worldview which included a repertoire of constructs related, or at least potentially related, to the early church movement. The author(s) then selected from and adapted these to construct a portrayal of the early church movement which would speak to their current rhetorical situation. Unfortunately, historical constructs, or data, are insufficient to reconstruct within believable boundaries a picture of that current rhetorical situation. Nonetheless, the portrayal that has been preserved characterizes the early church movement vis a vis institutional Judaism in a competitive type of way. This portrayal, in turn, was presumably an appropriate history for the needs of the then current group with its particular rhetorical situation.

As time passes, say into the present, current groups or movements which include the Acts portrayal in their repertoire of historical constructs (i.e., as part of the worldview within which they dwell) also need to portray themselves vis a vis other groups in ways appropriate for the action they wish to undertake. Part of a complete group portrayal is a history. Thus a group desiring at some point to create an innovational portrayal to speak to a current rhetorical situation probably could not draw upon the entire Acts portrayal convincingly. However, to a degree it could still employ the Acts portrayal by primarily drawing upon Acts at the high abstraction level of values and by selectively drawing upon only those specifics at a low abstraction level which are consistent with an innovational portrayal. By combining these constructs

from Acts with others selected from the worldview in which the group dwells, the movement could construct a picture of its history which would be consistent with an innovational stance in its current rhetorical situation.

Similarly, this same group, or another, in a different current rhetorical situation might wish to construct either an establishment-conflict or a competitive type of portrayal vis a vis another group. If competitive, then Acts as a whole, both at low and high levels of abstraction, could be drawn upon to create an appropriate remote history to support such a current type of group portrayal. If establishment-conflict, then a movement would need to focus primarily on values shared with the Acts portrayal at the highest possible levels of abstraction. A few specific establishment-conflict hints in the Acts portrayal could be selectively drawn upon also. These constructs in combination with others selected from the group's worldview (e.g., establishment-conflict constructs from the gospels or the Old Testament) could be used to construct an appropriate history for a current establishment-conflict stance.

I think the theoretical stance just articulated and illustrated has at least three conceptual yields for rhetorical movement theory. First, this stance would allow appropriately conceptualized rhetorical movement studies and theories to remain viable. To the extent that the members of a movement portray it as one type or another, and to the extent that this type of portrayal is invoked in every rhetorical situation throughout the life of the movement, then the movement can be justifiably labeled that type.

Second, this stance shifts the focus of research from trying to categorize a movement into a particular type, to trying to unfold the dynamic process of group portrayals as group rhetorical situations shift. This dynamic process as seen from this new focus includes: 1) the dimension of time through shifting rhetorical situations, 2) multiple perspectives by recognizing different concurrent and/or consecutive group portrayal types vis a vis other groups,

3) multiple group portrayals through a continuum from establishment-conflict through competitive to innovational types, and 4) perceptual selectivity in portrayal building by focusing on varying levels of abstraction. Increased attention to these aspects of the process could yield significantly refined analyses and theories of rhetorical movements.

For example, in one rhetorical situation, which could encompass a considerable period of time, a group might portray itself vis a vis another group in a competitive manner. During that same situation, it might portray itself vis a vis a different group in an establishment-conflict way. However, as the rhetorical situation shifts, appropriate shifts in group portrayals vis a vis other groups or movements might take place. In which case the stance advocated here would not require the dropping out of data or the denial of multiple perspectives, as, for instance, Smith and Windes seem to have done in necessarily fitting their case into the innovational type. [55] Rather, it recognizes that multiple types of group portrayals may be created vis a vis different and significant groups, and vis a vis changing rhetorical situations. These multiple portrayals might be establishment-conflict, competitive, innovational, or any type in between.

In addition, these shifts from one type of portrayal to another would take place by selectively drawing upon constructs from previous portrayals at varying levels of abstraction. In general, the greater the degree of shift along the continuum of portrayals, the higher the level of abstraction from which constructs in previous portrayals will have to be drawn. For instance, in different rhetorical situations an establishment-conflict to establishment-conflict rearticulation could draw upon previous group portrayal constructs at all levels of abstraction. An establishment-conflict to competitive shift would necessitate overlooking many specifics and drawing upon previous constructs at moderate to high abstraction levels. An establishment-conflict to innovational

shift would necessitate overlooking most specifics and drawing upon previous constructs only at the highest levels of abstraction.

Third, this stance appears to be applicable to a wide range of both historical and contemporary movements, even though the primary illustration given here is of an historical and religious nature. For instance, a minority-rights group or movement might begin with innovational portrayals vis a vis majority-culture groups and competitive portrayals toward another rival minority-rights group. A significant change in rhetorical situation might call for a united establishment-conflict portrayal of the minority-rights groups vis a vis majority-culture groups. Another significant change in rhetorical situation might set the stage for a new innovational portrayal (e.g., integration) or a competitive portrayal (e.g., segregation) toward majority-culture groups, and possible innovational, competitive, or even establishment-conflict type of portrayals toward other emerging minority-rights groups. Of course, the emergent portrayals could also fall anywhere between the three types outlined here. Such a scenario would appear to have potential for virtually any type of movement or group.

As a theoretical yield for an understanding of rhetorical vision, the above elaboration of types of group portrayals begins to speculate about the question: What does the analysis of rhetorical visions add up to? The answer given here is not simply that all groups seem to portray dramatis personae, scenarios and settings which are dynamically interrelated, but that discernable patterns of group portrayals vis a vis other significant groups also move across rhetorical visions. The rhetorical theory of movements along with the elaboration given here would suggest that these patterns include at least establishment-conflict, competitive, and innovational types. These types of portrayals dynamically appear within groups or movements as they seek to adapt their vision of themselves to changing groups and changing rhetorical situations. Each

portrayal created at a point or during a period of time is stowed away in memory or record waiting to be selectively retrieved as appropriate "history" in some subsequent portrayal in a new rhetorical situation. Thus group portrayals as well as group histories are dynamically created over time. Such a perspective might not only enrich the theory of the community of rhetorical critics, but also enhance participation in that group as well as others. As Kenneth Boulding has said, "In the jargon of the economist, our image of history should never be so free of uncertainty that we feel we can afford to dispense with liquid assests." [56]

Notes

[1] For example: Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 38 (1952), 184-188; Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetorical Structure of the Antimasonic Movement" in The Rhetorical Idiom, Donald C. Bryant, ed. (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1958); Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetorical Structure of the 'New Left' Movement: Part I," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 50 (1964), 113-135; James R. Andrews, "Piety and Pragmatism: Rhetorical Aspects of the Early British Peace Movement," Speech Monographs 34 (1967), 423-436; Leland M. Griffin, "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," in Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke, William H. Rueckert, ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969); Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 56 (1970), 1-11; Dan F. Hahn and Ruth M. Gonchar, "Studying Social Movements: A Rhetorical Methodology," The Speech Teacher 20 (1971), 44-52; Robert S. Cathcart, "New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically," Western Speech 36 (1972), 82-88; Karlyn K. Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 59 (1973), 74-86; Herbert W. Simons, James W. Chesebro, and C. Jack Orr, "A Movement Perspective on the 1972 Presidential Campaign," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 59 (1973), 168-179; James R. Andrews, "The Passionate Negation: The Chartist Movement in Rhetorical Perspective," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 59 (1973), 196-208; J. Robert Cox, "Perspectives on Rhetorical Criticism of Movements: Antiwar Dissent, 1964-1970," Western Speech 38 (1974), 254-268; Ralph R. Smith and Russel R. Windes, "The Innovational Movement: A Rhetorical Theory," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 61 (1975), 140-153; Carl Wayne Hensley, "Rhetorical Vision and the Persuasion of a Historical Movement: The Disciples of Christ in Nineteenth Century American Culture," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 61 (1975), 250-264;

Herbert W. Simons, "Changing Notions about Social Movements," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 62 (1976), 425-450; Ralph R. Smith and Russel R. Windes, "The Rhetoric of Mobilization: Implications for the Study of Movements," The Southern Speech Communication Journal 42 (1976), 1-19; Charles A Wilkinson, "A Rhetorical Definition of Movements," Central States Speech Journal 27 (1976), 88-94; Robert Cathcart, "Movements; Confrontation as Rhetorical Form," paper presented to the Central States Speech Association Convention, April 1977; Charles A. Wilkinson, "The Rhetorical Criticism of Movements; A Process Analysis of the Cantonsville Nine Incident," paper presented to the Central States Speech Association Convention, April 1977.

[2] Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 58 (1972), 396-407; Ernest G. Bormann, "The Eagleton Affair: A Fantasy Theme Analysis," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 59 (1973), 143-159; James W. Cheesebro, John F. Cragan, and Patricia McCullough, "The Small Group Technique of the Radical Revolutionary: A Synthetic Study of Consciousness Raising," Speech Monographs 40 (1973), 136-146; Ernest G. Bormann, Discussion and Group Methods: Theory and Practice, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), chapters 7, 9, and 10; Virginia Kidd, "Happily Ever After and Other Relationship Styles: Advice on Interpersonal Relations in Popular Magazines, 1951-73," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 64 (1975), 31-39; Hensley, "Rhetorical Vision and the Persuasion of a Historical Movement;" John F. Cragan, "Rhetorical Strategy: A Dramatization, Interpretation and Application," Central States Speech Journal 26 (1975), 4-11; Charles R. Bantz, "Television News: Reality and Research," Western Speech 39 (1975), 123-130; William R. Brown, "The Prime-Time Television Environment and Emerging Rhetorical Visions," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 62 (1976), 389-400; Ernest G. Bormann, "Fetching Good Out of Evil: A Rhetorical Use of Calamity," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 63 (1977), 130-139; David L. Rarick,

et al., "The Carter Persona: An Empirical Analysis of the Rhetorical Visions of Campaign '76," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 63 (1977), 258-273; John F. Cragan and Donald C. Shields, "Foreign Policy Communication Dramas: How Mediated Rhetoric Played in Peoria in Campaign '76," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 63 (1977), 274-289; William R. Brown, "Communication Systems and Hiatuses in Rhetorical Visions," paper presented to the Central States Speech Association Convention, April 1978.

[3] Smith and Windes, "The Innovational Movement;" Hensley, "Rhetorical Vision and the Persuasion of a Historical Movement."

[4] David Walsh (Sociology and the Social World," in Paul Filmer, et al., eds., New Directions in Sociological Theory, London: Collier-Macmillan, 1972, pp. 15-33) articulates this position in distinguishing the natural world as "an object world of material (sometimes tangible) sense data (facts) which are external to the observer and whose existence is independent of him" (p. 18), from the social world as a subject world which has intrinsic meaning given to it by those subjects. He adds, "It is not that a real objective factual social world exists out there to which the members of society are subject but that the actors in the process of apprehending this world (that is, explaining it, defining it, perceiving it) externalize and objectify it through the available mode by which apprehension can be articulated" (i.e., language; p. 18). In line with this perspective Bormann advocates that critics should take the discourse of a group (i.e., its externalized and objectified meanings for the members' world) as the substance of their social reality or rhetorical vision and through an analysis of this manifest content uncover the subjects' meanings or social reality. He writes, "If the critic can illuminate how people who participated in the rhetorical vision related to one another, how they arranged themselves into social hierarchies, how they acted to achieve the goals embedded in their dreams, and how they were aroused by the dramatic action and the dramatis personse within the manifest

content of their rhetoric, his insights will make a useful contribution to understanding the movement and its adherents" (Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision," p. 401). For recent articulations of this basic stance within the field of communication, see Jesse G. Delia, "A Constructivist Analysis of the Concept of Credibility," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 62 (1976), 361-375; Jesse G. Delia, "Constructivism and the Study of Human Communication," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 63 (1977), 66-83; William R. Brown, "Ideology as Communication Process," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 64 (1978), 123-140; C. Jack Orr, "How Shall We Say: 'Reality is Socially Constructed Through Communication?'" The Central States Speech Journal 29 (1978), 263-274. For another articulation of a related, if not essentially similar stance, see Thomas B. Farrell, "Knowledge, Consensus, and Rhetorical Theory," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 62 (1976), 1-14; Thomas S. Frentz and Thomas B. Farrell, "Language-Action: A Paradigm for Communication," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 62 (1976), 333-349; Walter M. Carleton, "What Is Rhetorical Knowledge? A Response to Farrell--and More," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 64 (1978), 313-328; Thomas B. Farrell, "Social Knowledge II," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 64 (1978), 329-334.

[5] Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision," p. 401.

[6] Ibid., pp. 401-402.

[7] Smith and Windes, "The Innovational Movement," pp. 140-141. For an argument against Smith and Windes, see Cathcart, "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form."

[8] Smith and Windes, "The Innovational Movement," pp. 142, 152-153.

[9] Ibid., p. 143

[10] For a recent critical discussion of the date and authorship of Acts, see Werner Georg Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, revised ed., trans. Howard Clark Kee (Nashville, Abingdon, 1975). In contrast to the later date

of composition (A.D. 80-90) for which Kümmel argues, another recent critical examination argues for an A.D. 57-62 date--see John A. T. Robinson, Redating the New Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976). Robinson also discusses the history of the debate over the dating of Acts. For a discussion of the question of historical reliability vis a vis the Roman culture of the day, see A. N. Sherwin-White, Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1963), particularly pp. 166-193.

[11] Kenneth E. Boulding, The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956), pp. 123-131.

[12] Acts 1:6-9 (NASV). All Scriptural quotations in the remainder of the paper are from the New American Standard Version.

[13] Acts 2:22-24, 36, 38.

[14] Acts 1:17; 2:41, 47; 4:3-5:12.

[15] Acts 4:17-18, 42; 6:7.

[16] Acts 8:51-53.

[17] Acts 8:1, 3.

[18] Acts 8:12, 26-40; 9:1-9; 10:1-11:18.

[19] Acts 11:13-18.

[20] Acts 12:1-17.

[21] Acts 9:15.

[22] Acts 13:4-14:28.

[23] Acts 15:1.

[24] Acts 15:19-21.

[25] Acts 15:40-20:38.

[26] Acts 19:20.

[27] Acts 23:11.

[28] Acts 23:6.

[29] Acts 24:1-26:23.

[30] Acts 28:31.

[31] Peter--Acts 2:1-42, 3:12-26, 10:23-43; Stephen--Acts 7:1-53; Paul--Acts 13:16-41, 24:10-21, 26:2-23, 28:23-28.

[32] Acts 2:14-36.

[33] Acts 13:16-41; 28:23.

[34] Acts 24:14.

[35] Acts 2:47.

[36] Acts 15:5.

[37] Acts 5:29-32.

[38] Acts 23:1-5.

[39] Acts 21:22-29.

[40] Acts 21:22-29.

[41] Acts 21:22-29.

[42] Acts 6:8-7:53.

[43] Acts 5:17; 13:45; 17:5.

[44] Acts 5:29-32.

[45] Acts 5:35-39.

[46] Acts 26:19-23.

[47] Delia, "A Constructivist Analysis of Credibility," and "Constructivism and the Study of Communication."

[48] Delia, "A Constuctivist Analysis of Credibility," p. 367. C.f., Delia, "Constructivism and the Study of Communication," pp. 69-72.

[49] Delia, "Constructivist Analysis of Credibility," p. 367.

[50] Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1967), p. 29.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., pp. 39-40. C.f., William R. Brown, "Making Present the Past: Public Address History," The Quarterly Journal of Speech 60 (1974), 237-240;

and Delia, "Constructivism and the Study of Communication," p. 79. Delia talks of these symbolic edifices in terms of an all-encompassing worldview within which more specific constructs or theories are embedded.

[53] Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision," p. 399. C.f., Berger and Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality, p. 31.

[54] Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric 1 (1968), 1-14.

[55] Smith and Windes ("The Innovational Movement," p. 144) write, "While all movements may employ one or more of these strategies, a consistent and necessary pattern of usage is to be found only in innovational movements. An establishment-conflict movement can, for example, deny conflict with some group on some occasion. But an innovational movement must consistently deny conflict and moderate its criticisms of institutions." Yet later they write, "While the debate over granting a charter to the American Sunday School Union would figure as the most dramatic confrontation within an establishment-conflict interpretation, the rhetoric generated by that conflict is neither a significant nor a representative sampling of the rhetoric of the Sunday school movement. To the contrary, Sunday school spokesmen made every effort to avoid highlighting the conflict, preferring to discuss far less damaging topics. Centering a study on this particular conflict would lead the student to ignore the American Union's concerted efforts at denial as well as its projection of a very different rhetorical vision" (p. 152). In addition, Smith and Windes discuss a possible interpretation of the Sunday school movement within an establishment-conflict approach (pp. 151-152). If such a portrayal was not found in any of the rhetoric of the movement, then they are justified in discounting it. However, to the extent that they relegate aspects of the rhetoric of a group to the category of "not representative" and to the extent that they ignore multiple group portrayals vis a vis different groups, their characterization of this movement would suffer

for lack of a more flexible and dynamic approach.

[56] Boulding, The Image, p. 131.

Potential Characterizations of Group Portrayals

vis a vis Other Significant Groups

Establishment-Conflict	Competitive	Innovational
Group Goals Portrayed in Terms of:		
radical change in or abolishment of existing values and institutional groups and substitution of new or radically changed values and groups	support of essential existing values and formation of a new group gradually to replace the existing outmoded institutional group(s)	support of existing values and creation of an additional modified group to aid existing institutional groups.
Group Strategies Portrayed in Terms of:		
(1) Creation of open conflict with existing values	(1) Denial of conflict with essential existing values	(1) Denial of conflict with existing values and the essential viability of existing institutional groups
(2) Open Declaration of the total inadequacy of existing institutional groups	(2) Criticism of the basic obsolescence of existing institutional groups and declaration of the strength of traditional values and the new institutional group(s) representing them	(2) Mild criticism of the weaknesses of traditional institutional groups and declaration of the strength of traditional values
(3) Emphasis upon an actor-scene dialectic with real persons as "devils" in the scene	(3) Emphasis upon a dialectic centered on the agency ratios and especially the agency-purpose ratio	(3) Emphasis upon a dialectic between the purpose and some impersonal, indefensible element in the scene